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Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Investigation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Summary

Media reports in early 2004 indicated the recurrence of acts of sexual exploitation and abuse of Congolese women and girls by United Nations peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in Bunia. MONUC and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations subsequently approached the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to conduct an investigation into the allegations. The investigation was conducted in Bunia between May and September 2004.

Interviews with Congolese women and girls confirmed that sexual contact with peacekeepers occurred with regularity, usually in exchange for food or small sums of money. Many of these contacts, which were further confirmed by evidence from others adduced by the OIOS team, involved girls under the age of 18, with some as young as 13.

Many of the 72 allegations originally reported to MONUC could not be substantiated or even fully investigated because of their non-specific nature. Nevertheless, OIOS was able to compile 20 case reports. One case that was substantiated involved an international civilian post. The remaining 19 cases involved peacekeepers from 3 contingents. Of those, six cases were fully substantiated. In another two cases, the identification of the perpetrators was not fully corroborated. In the remaining 11 cases, the victims and witnesses were unable

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to clearly identify the perpetrators. However, dozens of interviews with the girls themselves and with the young Congolese men who facilitated the encounters, as well as with aid workers, revealed a pattern of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers contrary to the standards set by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in its Ten Rules: Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets and the Mission's own code of conduct.

OIOS has made recommendations for corrective action based on the investigative findings, which are set out in 20 reports submitted to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC. The recommendations have all been accepted by the Department. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC for their assistance with the investigation.

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I. Introduction

1. Two reports, in March and May 2004, from Congolese women and a media organization alleged that United Nations peacekeepers with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in Bunia were involved in the sexual abuse and exploitation of local Congolese girls. In April 2004, the MONUC External Affairs/Code of Conduct Officer reviewed the situation in Bunia and reported to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for MONUC. According to that report, 24 allegations had been received involving soldiers from almost all of the Bunia-based contingents, as well as military observers and civilian staff.

2. Because of the scope and seriousness of the allegations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations requested the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to undertake a full investigation. Three OIOS investigators conducted an assessment mission in MONUC, including in Bunia, in May 2004. The investigators met with parties having knowledge of the allegations, observed the environment, prepared an investigation plan and assembled an investigation team.

3. In total, the investigation team consisted of 11 male and female investigators from nine nationalities and with varied professional skills; there were at least six investigators on the ground in Bunia at any given time. The team, while predominately composed of OIOS investigators, included one MONUC security officer, one civilian police officer and three female Congolese interpreters. In addition, the Ituri Brigade Military Police Commander served as the military liaison officer with the team. The team operated in Bunia for four months, from June to September 2004.

4. Bunia is situated in the Ituri District in the far north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and serves as the headquarters and logistics base of MONUC, sector 6. At the time of the investigation, nearly 11,000 military personnel were deployed by MONUC in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of that number some 4,500 were deployed in Ituri.

II. Investigative activities

A. Methodology

5. Both before and during the investigation, OIOS held meetings with concerned parties at United Nations Headquarters and at MONUC, including military personnel from the office of the MONUC Force Commander, the contingent commanders in Bunia, MONUC senior managers, staff of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations with responsibilities in the region, and Congolese citizens, as well as staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Legal Affairs at Headquarters. The purpose was to discuss the strategies for the investigation, answer procedural questions and seek support and general assistance.

6. In an effort to satisfy confidentiality requirements, as strictly stipulated in the mandate of OIOS (ST/SGB/273, para. 18 (b) and (c)), the investigation team also

made a special effort to protect the identities of the vulnerable victims and witnesses, especially because many were under 18 years of age, by assigning numbers instead of using their names.

B. Allegations

7. A total of 72 allegations, received primarily by MONUC staff, were investigated. For the most part, the allegations lacked specifics as to names of victims, witnesses and perpetrators. The investigation team set out to gather sufficient information on which to base its investigations, which included talking to the original sources of the allegations. Allegations that could lead to the identification of potential witnesses, victims or perpetrators were given priority and investigations of those cases were conducted by the team. A small unit continued to try to identify sources, victims and others in connection with the remaining allegations.

8. Of the 72 allegations, 68 concerned military contingent personnel and 4 involved international civilian posts. Three of the allegations involving civilians were not substantiated, but in the fourth the team determined that the person had acted inappropriately towards local women employed by the Mission and had downloaded and stored pornographic material on his office computer.

9. Of the 68 allegations involving military contingent personnel, OIOS closed 44 cases after preliminary investigations established that the victims and/or witnesses could not be identified or traced. OIOS closed seven additional cases that had been previously investigated and the results brought to the attention of MONUC administrators. Similarly, OIOS closed three other cases that could not proceed to the identification stage because the alleged perpetrators had already been rotated out of the mission area.

10. From the remaining 14 allegations, OIOS developed 19 cases involving military personnel. In six cases, the allegations against the peacekeepers were fully substantiated, and under-age girls were involved in all of them. In two cases, the evidence was convincing but not fully substantiated. In the remaining 11 cases, evidence was received of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers, but it was not corroborated. MONUC and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have received reports of the 19 cases for action. In none of those cases did the peacekeepers admit to the alleged sexual contact.

11. In many of the interviews conducted by the investigation team during its four months of field work, particularly of the younger girls, aged 11 to 14 years, it became clear that for most of them, having sex with the peacekeepers was a means of getting food and sometimes small sums of money. The boys and young men who facilitated sexual encounters between peacekeepers and the girls sometimes received food as payment for their services as well. In addition to the corroborated cases reported in the next section, interviews with other girls and women indicated the widespread nature of the sexual activity occurring in Bunia between peacekeepers and the local population. Although many of them could not identify the particular peacekeepers involved, their reports of regular sexual contact were detailed and convincing. A number of the girls said that they had never looked at the faces of the peacekeepers or that they were not able to differentiate among non-Congolese. For the youngest of the girls, recounting the events was extremely difficult. Many of

them had been raped during the conflict and the trauma of their lives made pressing them for evidence in these cases very delicate. In future, the likelihood that victims will be able to identify perpetrators and that witnesses will be able to corroborate the evidence can be increased by ensuring that incidents are reported shortly after their occurrence (rather than weeks or months later as in the present cases), by facilitating more contact between the girls and skilled, sensitive investigators able to draw the girls out and by developing programmes to make the girls feel safe. Examples of the cases demonstrate the nature of the sexual exploitation and the extreme youth of many of the girls. None of the peacekeepers identified admitted to the contacts, but the evidence against them is strong and has been corroborated.

C. Case studies

Case A

12. The girl, identified by OIOS as V046A, was 14 years old and lived with her family. Owing to a lack of funds, she did not attend school. She told the OIOS investigators that she had had sexual relations with a MONUC soldier who was known to her (PK1). Each time this soldier gave her $1 or $2 or two eggs in return. A witness, W046A, age 15, had introduced V046A to the soldier in return for bread. Another witness, W046B, age 12, had also helped the soldier to meet with V046A for sex.

13. The victim and two witnesses clearly described the soldier and noted that he had a broken arm. OIOS investigators, through the Ituri Brigade Military Police Commander, were able to trace the medical records of a soldier who had been treated for a broken arm at the contingent hospital in Bunia. The name and MONUC identification number of this soldier matched those of the soldier identified by the witnesses. OIOS investigators could not interview the soldier because he had been repatriated.

Case B

14. The victim in case A, V046A, also told OIOS that one of the witnesses, W046B, had introduced her to another MONUC soldier (PK2). She had had sexual intercourse with this soldier in return for $3 and a packet of milk. V046A further stated that PK2 had wanted to have sexual intercourse with her on a second occasion, but she had refused as he did not have money or food for her. The witness admitted to having facilitated sex between V046A and the soldier in return for bread and jam. The victim and witness positively identified the soldier both in the photo array and during the physical line-up. In his interview with OIOS investigators, the soldier denied having had sexual relations with any Congolese women or girls.

Case C

15. The girl, V030A, was 14 years old and did not attend school. She said that a MONUC soldier whom she had met at a camp behind the Médecins sans frontières hospital had given her food during their first four meetings but did not have sex with her. On the fifth occasion he requested her to have sex and she agreed. In return for sex, the soldier gave her $2, chocolate and bread. The victim's statement was corroborated by two other girls, aged 11 and 15, and two male witnesses, aged 18

and 20. The soldier was identified by V030A. The two witnesses confirmed the identification and stated that they had brought V030A to him for the purpose of sexual relations. The soldier was interviewed by OIOS investigators and denied having had any involvement with local Congolese girls or women.

Case D

16. The girl, V002B, who was 13 years old, told the OIOS investigators that she had had sex with a MONUC soldier who was known to her (PK3) at Ndoromo camp on at least four occasions. She reported that she and her friends would go to the camp to have sex with different soldiers. She stated that she had received cash ranging from $3 to $5 after each sexual encounter. Another victim, V002A, who was 14 years old, confirmed the statement of V002B. Both victims were able to identify the soldier from photographs and line-ups. The soldier was interviewed by OIOS investigators and denied any involvement with local Congolese women or girls.

Case E

17. The witness, W054A, is a local Congolese male, age 25, and a former militia soldier who confirmed to the OIOS investigators that he had been procuring girls for MONUC soldiers for sexual relations. Those soldiers were involved in sexual activity with a group of four girls: two aged 17, one 16 and another 14, who were supplied by W054A. The evidence established that one soldier, PK4, had had sexual relations several times with V054B, age 17, and in return he had given her some food. Witness W054A was able to identify the soldier in a photo array and corroborated his identification in a physical line-up. The victim was also able to identify the soldier in the line-up. The soldier was interviewed by OIOS investigators and denied any involvement with local Congolese women and girls.

Case F

18. In this case, the evidence established that a MONUC soldier had had sex with victim V054C, 14 years old, on several occasions. In exchange for sex, he gave her food. Witness W054A identified the soldier in both the photo array and the line-up. The victim corroborated this identification in the line-up.

III. Applicable legal provisions

19. The evidence in these cases demonstrates that peacekeepers were involved in exploitative behaviour by having sexual relations with local Congolese girls, all of whom in these cases were younger than 18, with five of the six victims being 14 years of age or younger. In addition, the MONUC code of conduct and the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) provide that sexual activity with children (persons under 18) is prohibited regardless of the local age of majority or consent and that the mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence.

20. Sexual exploitation and abuse is prohibited conduct under rule 4 of the Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets and the MONUC code of conduct. The MONUC code of conduct specifically defines an act of sexual abuse and/or exploitation as any exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex. In each of the substantiated cases, the perpetrators effectively breached the Code of

Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets and the MONUC code of conduct by exchanging money and food for sex with girls under 18 years of age. Failure to observe these strict standards of conduct renders the perpetrators liable to disciplinary action for serious misconduct as defined in section III of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Directives for Disciplinary Matters Involving Military Members of National Contingents. All troop-contributing countries recognize the Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets as binding.

21. Subsequent to the establishment of the MONUC code of conduct, the Secretary-General promulgated the bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (see para. 19 above). This bulletin is binding on United Nations staff and its provisions are similar to those contained in the MONUC Code of Conduct. Both documents elaborate on the standards found in the Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets. Section 1 of the bulletin defines sexual exploitation as "any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another". Sexual abuse is defined as "actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions". Section 2 of the MONUC code of conduct has similar provisions and also provides that sexual exploitation and abuse is defined, among other things, as any sexual misconduct that has a detrimental effect on the image, credibility, impartiality or integrity of the United Nations. As the cases reported above demonstrate, those factors were present in abundance in Bunia.

22. By section 7 of the Secretary-General's bulletin on observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law (ST/SGB/1999/13), United Nations forces conducting operations under United Nations command and control are prohibited from committing acts of sexual exploitation and abuse and have a particular duty to protect women and children from such assaults. Thus such sexual contact is not only prohibited, but also is a significant failure in the responsibility of peacekeepers to protect the most vulnerable members of Congolese society. The need for the contingents to be close to the local population in order to protect them from militia attacks provides not only an opportunity to supply the required care, but also, unfortunately, an opportunity to exploit the dire needs of vulnerable children, thereby violating the directive.

23. Similarly, in demanding or seeking sexual favours from these vulnerable victims, the peacekeepers abused their positions of power. By virtue of not only their unequal social positions but also their relative wealth — the ability to bestow small amounts of money or food on the girls and the facilitators — the peacekeepers could take advantage of the local population, which has little means of its own.

IV. Investigative findings

A. Problem of sexual exploitation and abuse

24. The sexual exploitation and abuse of young girls in Bunia by local factions arose during the conflict that erupted in that region, in which numerous girls were raped and many were left without families or means of support. The later presence of international peacekeepers added another dimension and augmented the problem.

In the existing conditions, many children were rendered homeless and orphaned or their families were unable to provide basic necessities, thereby causing them to resort to other means of support.

25. Although there were allegations involving women over the age of 18, the majority of the victims identified in the investigation were between 12 and 16 years of age. They were poor village children whose lives had been significantly affected by civil war and whose encounters with foreigners prior to the arrival of MONUC in their land had been limited. Most were illiterate, with only a handful reportedly having attended school. OIOS had difficulty gaining full access to most of these young victims, some of whom were under care and receiving psychological counselling, while others lived outside Bunia's secure zone.

26. The Congolese males who helped to introduce the girls to the peacekeepers were mainly young boys aged 8 to 18, and a few young men aged 20 to 25. They facilitated the peacekeepers' access to the girls and so functioned as procurers or pimps while living at the internally displaced persons camp or on the streets. They reported having been paid $1 and/or food for each girl brought to the peacekeepers. However, in many cases, they said, the peacekeepers gave nothing in exchange for the girls. Some of them were former child soldiers from the Congolese militia. A few of the boys attended school; the rest had dropped out because of a lack of funds for school fees or a lack of interest. Some of the older ones did manual labour at the military camps and therefore were familiar with the peacekeepers.

27. The venues for the sexual activities were identified as various prearranged meeting places, such as inside the guard posts, in mostly rundown shelters, in the bush near the military camps at rented or abandoned accommodations, or even on bare ground behind buildings, under mango trees. The activities usually occurred just after dark, normally between 7 and 10 p.m.

28. The peacekeepers implicated in the allegations and interviewed by OIOS were not officers but rather enlisted or non-commissioned personnel serving at guard posts or at the camps. They were between 24 and 45 years of age. For most of them, MONUC was their first mission assignment. Although the cases investigated by the OIOS team involved only some peacekeepers from three of the Bunia-based contingents, it cannot be assumed that members of other contingents did not engage in similar improper activities, given the credible reports received by the OIOS team from many of those interviewed, including victims, witnesses and others in the region. Nor can it be assumed that some contingents were necessarily more involved in those activities than others. Often, though, it is the demands and requirements of the contingent commanders that have the greatest impact on the conduct of the contingent troops. OIOS reports only on the cases it has investigated.

29. It should be noted that it was the intention of OIOS to name the troop-contributing countries whose soldiers had been identified as having exploited and abused the local female population in Bunia. Instead, however, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has, as recommended in the present report, provided the relevant troop-contributing countries with the investigative reports on the cases concerning their contingents so that they can take appropriate action. At the same time, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is currently developing a more robust policy to address sexual exploitation and abuse issues.

B. Environmental factors contributing to sexual abuse

30. As a result of the ethnic conflict that broke out in the Ituri District in May 2003, many area residents were displaced and impoverished. The internally displaced persons camp, sheltering 10,000 people, is located inside the boundary of Bunia town, adjacent to the MONUC logistics base. The military camps are also located in close proximity to the local population. Although this provides the necessary security buffer against the militias, it also allows for informal interaction between peacekeepers and the local population, creating an environment for exploitation and abuse to occur.

31. One of the major causes encouraging the abuse is poverty resulting from the separation of families by internal conflict. Most of the victims and witnesses are extremely vulnerable, not only because of their youth, but also because they are living alone, with other children or with older relatives in extended families who are unable to provide for them. The victims and a significant number of the boys are not in school because they cannot afford the fees.

32. Hunger has encouraged children to try to make contact with members of the MONUC troops to seek food or a little money. Food insecurity is brought about by the population's inability to access their farmlands because of fear of attacks from the militia. Consequently, the population that was once self-sufficient in food supplies is finding it difficult to subsist. There is a scarcity of employment opportunity in the town, and the food supply in the camp is reportedly inadequate. A breakdown of family and community structures is the result.

33. OIOS also noted the paucity of programmes and facilities to empower, protect or assist vulnerable women and children. Lacking work opportunities, many are without alternative sources of food, clothing and other necessities.

34. At present, the inadequate security perimeter fencing around the military camps also enables the peacekeepers, and their illegal visitors, to move about the camp unnoticed by their supervisors or the few camp guards. Patrols by the military police were insufficient to discourage peacekeepers from engaging in sexual misconduct. The efforts of contingent commanders to enforce discipline were also found to be inadequate. Although the contingent commanders had asserted that their troops were not allowed outside their camps unless on duty, the OIOS team observed peacekeepers in public places, especially restaurants, in the town, not always in uniform. This created not only opportunities for interaction with the local populace, but also potential security problems. For example, in September 2004, an incident occurred where Congolese militia abducted a MONUC peacekeeper who was allegedly in civilian attire among the local population in an area outside the designated secure zone.

35. Although MONUC has prepared directives on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, at present, little has been done to implement an effective prevention programme in Bunia. Although an instruction circular was issued establishing the MONUC Personnel Conduct Committee, the Committee exists only on paper, as no agreement on its terms of reference has been reached by those responsible for finalizing it.

36. The team's interviews with the implicated peacekeepers also raised doubts as to whether they had received an adequate briefing on the Code of Personal Conduct

for Blue Helmets before being deployed in the Mission. They claimed that they had not been apprised of the Code of Conduct, although some of their senior officers maintained that a briefing had been held. Moreover, at present, it does not appear that even after the allegations surfaced the standards of conduct were reinforced with the troops. Such gaps have contributed greatly to the problem; if they are not addressed, the problem is likely to escalate, especially with the expected influx of additional troops to be deployed in the country.

C. Problems in obtaining cooperation from the contingents

37. At the start of the investigation, OIOS investigators met with representatives of the contingents in Bunia to advise them formally of the investigation and to elicit their assistance and cooperation. The contingent commanders agreed and expressed their willingness to provide the necessary cooperation.

38. As the investigation progressed, contact was maintained with the contingents both directly and through the assistance of the Bunia Brigade Commander, Chief of Staff of Administration, Legal Adviser, Provost Marshal and Deputy Provost Marshal. Although one contingent was timely in responding to OIOS requests for assistance, issues arose with two of the other contingents concerning their willingness to assist in identifying possible perpetrators. On several occasions, the commanders of these contingents either failed to provide the requested information or assistance or actively interfered with the investigation. In order to resolve such problems, OIOS sought and received direct support from a number of senior managers of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

V. Conclusions

39. The OIOS investigation into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse of local Congolese women and girls found that the problem was serious and ongoing. Equally disturbing was the lack of a protection and deterrence programme even at the present time.

40. The investigation was hampered by problems in obtaining the requisite assistance and cooperation from two military contingents and in obtaining access to some of the witnesses and victims. Nonetheless, the OIOS team was able to investigate 72 allegations against both military and civilian MONUC personnel. This resulted in 20 case reports. One case involved an international civilian post, while the other 19 cases involved military personnel. In six of those cases, the perpetrators were positively identified. In another two cases the identification was not fully corroborated. In the remaining 11 cases, the victims and witnesses were unable to clearly identify the perpetrators.

41. The majority of the cases were closed after a preliminary investigation, largely because they were duplicative or too vague to allow for positive identification of a victim, witness or perpetrator. Very few of the allegations involved civilian personnel, and in three of the four cases that did, the allegations were not substantiated. In the fourth, the person was found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct with two female Congolese MONUC staff members, as well as to have downloaded and stored pornographic material on his office computer.

42. The OIOS investigation also addressed factors that influenced the lack of corroboration in the identification of perpetrators. The investigators found that most victims were unable to make positive identifications because, for example, they had had only one encounter with the perpetrator and did not take note of identifying characteristics; they had met the perpetrators in the dark and either did not look at their faces or did not see them properly; they were very young and unfamiliar with those not native to their areas and were therefore unable to distinguish one non-Congolese person from another; and they did not recall events weeks or months later.

43. OIOS identified the following factors as contributing to the problem of sexual exploitation of the local community: poverty affecting the general population, especially the internally displaced persons at the camp; food insecurity of the general population; idleness among non-school-going children; the erosion of family and community structures; discrimination against women and girls; insecurity of the perimeter fencing, encouraging interaction between the military and the general population; inadequate patrols by military police and insufficient enforcement of military discipline; the absence of any programmes for off-duty peacekeepers; the lack of a sexual harassment and abuse prevention programme in MONUC; and a lack of facilities or programmes aimed at protecting the vulnerable population.

44. The troop rotations also have kept many of the peacekeepers from having to account for their actions. OIOS noted with great concern that, despite knowledge that the investigation was ongoing, sexual activities between the military and the local population apparently continued. This was evidenced by the presence of freshly used condoms near military camps and guard posts and by the additional allegations of recent cases of solicitations brought to the attention of the OIOS team during the last days of the investigation. It was clear that the investigation did not act as a deterrent for some of the troops, perhaps because they had not been made aware of the severe penalties for engaging in such conduct, nor had they seen any evidence of a negative impact on individual peacekeepers for such behaviour. Without strong reinforcement of the legal requirements and prompt sanctions for violations, they may well continue this behaviour.

45. Of equal concern is the fact that the prevention programme required by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for MONUC has not been put in place in the Mission. Few military or civilian staff seemed aware of the directives, policies, rules and regulations governing sexual contact that they were obligated to follow. Although many peacekeepers are conducting themselves appropriately under difficult circumstances, those who engage in conduct that violates legal norms must be made aware that there will be sanctions and penalties. The hundreds of interviews conducted by the OIOS team reveal a pattern of activity that cannot be allowed to continue.

46. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for MONUC provided the following comments:

> I firmly believe that emphasis needs to be placed on the accountability of the officers of contingents to which the perpetrators belong, from contingent to company and platoon commanders. It is clearly evident that while there has been no shortcoming insofar as disseminating the code of conduct and the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on matters of sexual exploitation and abuse, the same cannot be said for the enforcement of this. In certain

instances, it is apparent that the feeling of impunity is such that not only have the policies not been enforced, but the command structures have not always given investigators their full cooperation. I also consider it imperative that the results of Member States' actions against the perpetrators of these abuses be made available to the United Nations and that the Mission highlight to incoming commanders the gravity and extent of the problem and underscore the commanders' responsibility to prevent similar acts during their mandate. Only such stern deterrents, in my view, will enable us to stamp out sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the peacekeeping environment.

47. OIOS concurs with the position outlined by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for MONUC and looks forward to collaborative efforts between Member States and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on deterrence modalities.

VI. Recommendations

48. Based on the findings of this investigation, OIOS offers recommendations that may alleviate the problem, at least at MONUC, but that may be applied in other missions as well. OIOS is aware of the substantial work being done by the adviser to the Secretary-General on this issue and, in particular, notes that his work will address the responses of the troop-contributing countries to this problem.

Recommendation 1

49. Upon review of the individual cases in which peacekeepers have been implicated, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should request the relevant troop-contributing country to take appropriate action against the military personnel identified and to advise the Department as to the action undertaken (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/01);[1]

Recommendation 2

50. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC, as a matter of high priority, should implement a strong prevention programme, with emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable girls (those under 18 years of age), and establish a rapid-response detection programme, utilizing personnel experienced in such cases, beginning in Bunia on an expedited basis and then expanding to the other regions of MONUC (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/02);

Recommendation 3

51. Senior MONUC managers must become more involved and demand accountability from both civilian administrators and contingent commanders in the Mission. MONUC must take steps to ensure that administrators and officers demonstrate implementation of all existing regulations and policies aimed at preventing sexual abuse and exploitation (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/03);

[1] The symbols in parentheses in this section refer to an internal code used by OIOS for recording recommendations.

Recommendation 4

52. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC should undertake a programme to provide regular briefings for troops on their responsibilities to the local population and on prohibited behaviours and to ensure that all troops and civilians on United Nations missions are fully conversant with United Nations policies on the subject of sexual exploitation and abuse (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/04);

Recommendation 5

53. The MONUC Force Commander, in conjunction with contingent commanders, should enforce strict discipline over the personnel under their command (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/05);

Recommendation 6

54. MONUC should identify and implement measures that ensure that all military compounds are adequately secured to prevent unauthorized entry and egress as well as ad hoc trading between troops and the local population (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/06);

Recommendation 7

55. MONUC should collaborate, perhaps under the auspices of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with other non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies in the Bunia area to find ways of strengthening the existing programmes to empower and protect the vulnerable population to allow for alternative means of survival (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/07);

Recommendation 8

56. Given that this problem is not unique to MONUC, and with new missions being opened in areas where similar problems can arise, it is recommended that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations consider a wider application of prevention and detection policies to protect against sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers. This may include the designation of local officials or non-governmental organizations to receive reports of sexual exploitation and abuse; the central reporting of all cases to mission senior management on an expedited basis; the development of mission-based rapid-response teams; the development of educational programmes for the troops on their responsibilities and on sanctions for sexual exploitation and abuse; the public naming and shaming of those found to have engaged in sexual exploitation and abuse; and the permanent exclusion from peacekeeping missions of those troops who engage in sexual exploitation and abuse and of their contingents' commanders (ID Rec. No. IV04/141/08).

57. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has agreed with all eight of the recommendations, which it feels will help guide it in moving forward to establish procedures to attempt to eliminate the problem.

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services